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Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

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1100 Peachtree Street, Suite 2800

Atlanta, GA 30309-4530

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jlhice@kilpatrick.foundationip.com

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

Ex parte TAPANI JUHA OTALA

Appeal 2015-008178
Application 12/830,800
Technology Center 2100

Before CAROLYN D. THOMAS, KEVIN C. TROCK, and
KARA L. SZPONDOWSKI, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

SZPONDOWSKI, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION ON APPEAL

Appellant appeals under 35 U.S.C. § 134(a) from the Examiner's Final Rejection of claims 1, 2, 4–9, 11–14, and 20–22. Claims 3, 10, and 15–19 have been cancelled. Claims App. We have jurisdiction under 35 U.S.C. § 6(b).

We REVERSE.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Appellant's invention is directed to managing thumbnail data associated with digital assets, and in particular, to the storage of such data. Spec. 2, ll. 14–26. Claim 1, reproduced below with the disputed limitation in *italics*, is illustrative of the claimed subject matter:

1. A method comprising:

receiving a digital asset;

generating, based on the digital asset, multiple sets of thumbnail data for different sized thumbnails, each of the multiple sets of thumbnail data encoded to support display of a respective thumbnail rendition of the digital asset at a different respective thumbnail resolution; and

storing the multiple sets of thumbnail data in a thumbnail file stored as a single unit of storage partitioned into preallocated regions,

each preallocated region having a different respective size,

the size of each preallocated region corresponding to a maximum size of thumbnail data that can reside therein,

wherein multiple thumbnail files are created for multiple digital assets by partitioning each of the multiple thumbnail files into the preallocated regions, *wherein common offset locations in each of the respective thumbnail files identify where thumbnail data supporting particular thumbnail resolutions are stored*; and

wherein, when the thumbnail file is used by a recipient device, the recipient device retrieves thumbnail data supporting a thumbnail resolution of interest by identifying an offset location of a preallocated region in the thumbnail file corresponding to the thumbnail resolution of interest.

REJECTION

Claims 1, 2, 4–9, 11–14, and 20–22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ligtenberg et al. (US 5,682,441; issued Oct. 28, 1997) (“Ligtenberg”).

ANALYSIS

Dispositive Issue: Did the Examiner err in finding Ligtenberg discloses “wherein common offset locations in each of the respective thumbnail files identify where thumbnail data supporting particular thumbnail resolutions are stored,” as recited in independent claim 1 and commensurately recited in independent claim 20?

Appellant contends “Ligtenberg’s teachings regarding tiles do not teach using a common offset location in multiple files.” App. Br. 10. Rather, Appellant argues the cited portion of Ligtenberg “relates specifically to how multiple portions of a single image are stored . . . [and] is entirely irrelevant to whether the thumbnail image formed by the tiles will have the same size or offset as another image in another file.” Reply Br. 4.

We are persuaded by Appellant’s arguments. Ligtenberg describes decomposing an image to produce a reduced image at a lower resolution (a “thumbnail”) and a set of additional (or complementary) pixel data. Ligtenberg col. 2, ll. 40–55. The reduced image and additional pixel data at a given resolution may be referred to as a “layer.” Ligtenberg col. 2, ll. 48–50. The thumbnail and complementary images may be subdivided into tiles and stored in a tile block. Ligtenberg, col. 6, ll. 7–11; col. 2, ll. 33–36. The file comprises individual blocks for each of the tiles and “includes an index that contains the locations (offsets in file) of all the tile blocks.” Ligtenberg

col. 6, ll. 37–39, 46–47. In certain embodiments where compression is not used or where compression is to a fixed size, the tile blocks are all of equal length in a given layer. Ligtenberg col. 6, ll. 52–57.

Having considered the Examiner’s findings with respect to the teachings in Ligtenberg, we find the Examiner has failed to provide sufficient findings that show Ligtenberg discloses the disputed limitation. Specifically, the Examiner finds “[t]he fixed length of the tile effectively becomes the ‘common offset location’ for that given layer.” Ans. 6 (citing Ligtenberg col. 6, ll. 55–57); *see also* Final Act. 4 (citing Ligtenberg col. 6, ll. 46–61). However, the claim requires “common offset locations in each of the respective thumbnail files,” not common offset locations for a single given layer. Moreover, the Examiner has not directed us to disclosure in Ligtenberg describing the claimed multiple thumbnail files. In other words, the Examiner’s findings show at most a common offset location within a layer of a single file. We agree with Appellant that this does not show a common offset location in another file.

Because we agree with at least one of the arguments advanced by Appellant, we need not reach the merits of Appellant’s other arguments. Accordingly, we do not sustain the Examiner’s 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of independent claims 1 and 20, and for the same reasons, dependent claims 2, 4–9, 11–14, 21, and 22.

DECISION

For the above reasons, the Examiner’s rejection of claims 1, 2, 4–9, 11–14, and 20–22 is reversed.

REVERSED